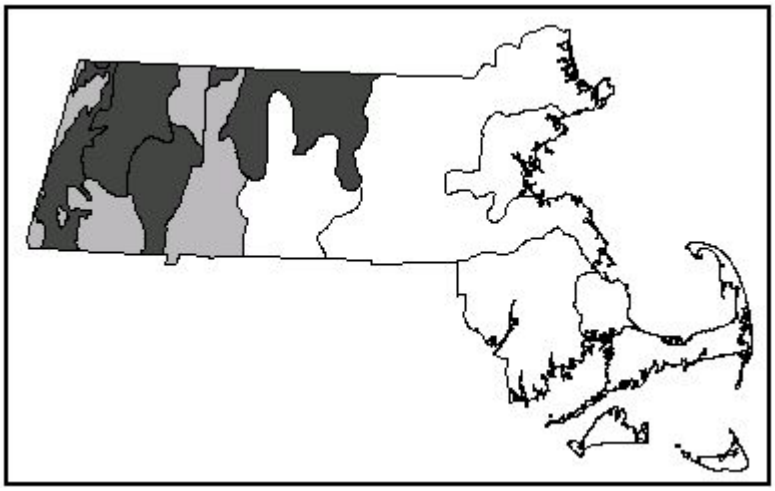
Community Name: **RIVERSIDE SEEP**
Community ELCODE: CP2A0B2200
SRANK: S2



Concept: Mixed herbaceous community occurring on rocky edges of rivers where flood and ice scour maintain an open community and groundwater discharge provides mineral enrichment.

Environmental setting: Riverside seeps occur at the base of steep riverbanks where groundwater seeps out of the bottom of the upland slope. Mineral-rich seepage leads to a high species diversity and periodic flooding from the river helps to prevent woody shrub encroachment. Calcareous (limey) riverside seeps occur along the Connecticut River in New Hampshire and Vermont and are characterized by their fen-like conditions and calcium-loving plant species, particularly false asphodel (*Tofieldia glutinosa*), Kalm's lobelia (*Lobelia kalmii*), and grass-of-Parnassus (*Parnassia glauca*). Comparable riverine limey seep communities are not known to occur in Massachusetts [Motzkin 1993]. The known occurrences of riverside seeps in Massachusetts along the Westfield and Deerfield Rivers lack the calcareous conditions and indicators of limey seeps to the north. More information is needed on the water chemistry of riverside seeps in Massachusetts, and on the range of conditions and species assemblages present in the Commonwealth. Riverside seeps are often associated with riverside outcrop communities and high-energy riverbank communities (gravel bars).

Vegetation Description: The wettest spots are typically mossy with a mixture of herbs and sedges. Characteristic herbs include spotted Joe-pye-weed (*Eupatorium maculatum*), boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), orange jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), and fringed loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata*). Yellow monkey flower (*Mimulus moschatus*), Canadian burnet (*Sanguisorba canadensis*), and golden alexanders (*Zizia aurea*) are indicative of minerotrophic conditions, and they are good indicator species of the community type. The non-native plants, colt's foot (*Tussilago farfara*) and purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), can also be abundant in the community. Graminoids known to occur in riverside seeps include wool-grass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), marsh-rush (*Juncus canadensis*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), green-fruited bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), sallow sedge (*Carex lurida*), northern awned-sedge (*Carex gynandra*), and seep-sedge (*Carex scabrata*). The vegetation composition described here is probably limited to sites occurring in the western part of the state.

Associations: No associations have been described in Massachusetts.

Habitat values for Associated Fauna:

Associated rare plants:

ALNUS VIRIDIS SSP CRISPA	MOUNTAIN ALDER	SC
CAREX TRICHOCARPA	HAIRY-FRUITED SEDGE	T
HALENIA DEFLEXA	SPURRED GENTIAN	E
JUNCUS NODOSUS	KNOTTED RUSH	- WL
MIMULUS MOSCHATUS	MUSKFLOWER	T

From: Swain, P.C. & J.B. Kearsley. 2001. Classification of the Natural Communities of Massachusetts. Version 1.3. Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. Westborough, MA.

Associated rare animals:

NONE KNOWN

Examples with Public Access: Westfield River in Cummington.

Threats: It is not known to what extent dam construction and the resulting altered hydrology has affected the occurrence of riverside seep communities. These communities are disturbed by trampling from recreation which leads to the invasion of non-native plant species. Purple loosestrife can be dominant where disturbance is high.

Management needs: Removal of non-native plant species and maintenance of natural flooding regimes.

Synonyms

USNVC/TNC: Not described. Related to Triantha glutinosa – Carex garberi Herbaceous Vegetation [CEGL006142]

MA [old name]: New England Riverside Seep Community.

ME: Includes related communities: 2001 - Circumneutral Riverside Seep. 1991 - Riverside Seep Community.

VT: Calcareous Riverside.

NH: Calcareous Riverside Seep Community; Acidic Riverside Seep Community.

NY: Riverside ice meadow.

CT: Not described.

RI: Not described.

Golet & Larson, 1974:

Other:

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